

I am unable to attend the public hearing on February 22nd regarding choice for students with regard to dissection, but I would like to offer the following testimony:

I support student choice and oppose animal dissection in schools for the following reasons:

- Students at all educational levels have objections to cutting up animals for dissection. Forcing these students to dissect dead animals can interfere with their ability to learn the required information, cause them psychological trauma, and even discourage them from pursuing careers in science.
- Both the National Science Teachers Association and the National Association of Biology Teachers support dissection choice policies.
- Modern alternatives to dissection like computer programs, DVDs, and models have been shown to teach anatomy and biology as well as or better than dissection.
- Alternatives to dissection save teachers and schools time and money because they last for years and do not need to be re-ordered for each class.
- Fifteen states—including Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York—have laws or policies allowing students to opt out of dissection.

I am now in my 40s but still vividly recall having to dissect a living frog in biology class. It was traumatizing then and the recollection continues to be traumatizing now. I am an individual with a great love for animals, wildlife and the natural environment, and a big supporter of our natural parks, open space, and wildlife preservation. Dissection of live animals is against everything I believe in. I know I am not alone and that other students over the years have found this school routine to be as traumatizing as I did. I strongly support choice for such students.

Thank you for considering my strongly held beliefs.

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